

# **SHARED CODE OF ETHICS AND VALUES OF THE COMMUNITIES OF CROWN POINT, HIGHLAND, MUNSTER, SCHERERVILLE AND WHITING**

## **Preamble**

The proper operation of the government of our communities requires that all official representatives be effective, independent, objective and accountable to the people they serve. To ensure these qualities are upheld, the communities have adopted this Code of Ethics and Values to promote and maintain the highest standards of personal and professional conduct in our community. All elected and appointed officials, employees, volunteers, and others who participate in our government are required to subscribe to this Code, understand how it applies to their specific responsibilities and practice these core values in their work. Because we value the public's confidence and trust in our services and its decision-makers, our character and behaviors must meet the most demanding ethical standards and demonstrate the highest levels of achievement in following this code.

## **Our Values**

### **Honesty/Integrity**

- To act with moral courage.
- To make decisions for the public's best interests, even when they may not be popular.
- To not engage in any business that would be – directly or indirectly – inconsistent with the conscientious performance of my public duties.
- To make no private promises of any kind that may unduly influence my public duties.
- To accept the responsibility to: (1) expose corrupt practices and/or behaviors and, (2) where empowered to do so, protect any public employee from retaliation who has exposed corrupt practices and/or behaviors.

### **Respect/Civility**

- To treat others as I would wish to be treated.
- To accomplish the goals and responsibilities of my individual position, while respecting my role as a member of a team and the community at large.
- To act in a professional and responsive manner.
- To work together in a spirit of tolerance and understanding.
- To work to build consensus and accommodate diverse opinions.
- To communicate effectively by listening carefully, asking questions and responding in a way that adds value to conversations.

## **Accountability/Responsibility**

- To not participate in any decision where I have a conflict of interest or from which my family, business and professional associates or I may personally benefit.
- To not use my position, public property or public resources for the personal benefit of myself, my family or my business and professional associates.
- To never solicit or accept any favor or benefit for my family, my business and professional associates or myself that might be construed as influencing the performance of my public duties.
- To make full public disclosure of the nature of any conflict of interest prior to any action taken.
- To avoid disclosing or abusing the information that I gain by virtue of my position for the personal benefit of myself, my family or businesses and professional associates.
- To not engage in direct competition with our respective community while I am an employee, an appointed official, or an elected official.
- To support the public's right to know the truth and encourage diverse and civil public debate in the decision-making process.

## **Fairness/Justice**

- To promote non-discrimination in my decision-making for our respective community and to make decisions based upon the merits of the issue at hand.
- To recognize the function of government to serve the best interests of the citizens.
- To use my authority to promote the efficient and effective delivery of public services.
- To refrain from proposing services where adequate resources are not available.
- To work to remedy the imbalance where inadequate resources adversely affect the best interests of the citizens.

Behavior inconsistent with the values set forth in this code may be redressed by the traditional instruments of governance including state law, ordinances, and work rules.